

February 2007

Growing and strengthening AVP in 2007

At the last national gathering one discussion that bought consensus was our commitment to growing and strengthening AVP. Despite the problems that both local groups and national trustees had faced, we were all determined to build on our successes and take AVP forward.

This process has already begun in many ways. Our new National Action Group (NAG) is tackling key issues such as fundraising to subsidise facilitator training, how we evaluate our workshops and strategies to recruit more facilitators. The training group has recently recruited new members and is meeting to develop our national training policy and coordinate more T for F's next year. AVP also welcomes two new members of staff to the team, Emma Walsh in Manchester and a new national prison project Coordinator, Rosie Aubrey. Our regional groups are starting to share information

and support each other and Sheffield's successful partnership with Doncaster Mind is being replicated across the country.

A key focus for AVP in 2007 is to achieve Open College Network accreditation. This status would enable us to return to our work in prisons as well as adding value for both participants and facilitators. We hope to pilot accredited workshops in 2007 and if successful, to develop this across the country over the next year.

As you will see from the regional reviews, there are lots of successes to build on and plenty of new opportunities to take AVP forward. With such a dedicated group of facilitators and volunteers AVP can go from strength to strength and we look forward to an exciting year of growth and development in 2007.

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Attention: Upcoming AVP Major Event!

AVP York is looking to host a residential national gathering in early autumn 2007. This could cost around £100 per person for up to 30 people including 2 nights accommodation, and meals. There may be opportunities to apply for funding to subsidise these costs.

The Midlands & Wales region have offered to devise a programme which will include skill top ups and training for facilitators as well as policy development and a chance to socialise. More information will be sent out soon. We hope to see you there!

Contact

We welcome enquiries, comments and letters. Get in touch with...

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Regional Updates

LONDON - Natalie Hewison

AVP London is heading into its second year of funding by the Indigo Trust and as such, it is an important year for consolidating partnerships and developing workshop programmes. We are hoping to replicate the success of AVP Sheffield's partnership with Doncaster Mind with our own local Mind Centre and parents at the Sure Start Centre in Edmonton have requested that AVP return to deliver more workshops this year. We are also developing an exciting new partnership with St Mungo's, London's largest homelessness charity and are working to offer AVP workshops as a support for new hostel residents and also as part of their independent living programme. As well as our work for other organisations, we are looking forward to another successful year of community workshops. The last year has seen more referrals from organisations and statutory bodies as our reputation grows and we are finally starting to hold workshops that reflect London's diverse community.



Over the next year, we will be working to deliver training workshops to organisations and are starting in January with a full level 1 workshop for the Hackney Youth Offending Team. As well as helping to establish our reputation amongst service providers, these training workshops also provide a vital source of income that supplements the work we do with other charities and their vulnerable clients.

Getting AVP back into London prisons is a key focus for us this year. HMP Brixton is currently working with us to support our application for internal accreditation. Once we have gained approval for our programme we have full funding and support to implement a long term series of workshops at Brixton and will need the experience of facilitators across the country. Other London prisons have also expressed an interest in AVP workshops, subject to the accreditation so armed with prison service approval and the support of new PPC Rosie, we hope to see a welcome return to prison work in 2007.

'Warm, friendly, fun learning that makes conflict resolution a positive experience.'

-Level 1 participant

Photo: A few of our participants and facilitators at the January workshop in London.

EAST MIDLANDS AND THE NORTH EAST - Jenny Hartland

14 AVPers from Notts & Derby, Northumbria, Sheffield, York, Leeds, Bradford and remote bits of North Yorkshire met in York on 19th January and agreed to become AVP East Midlands and the N.E. This means that the UK regional jigsaw is now complete. A meeting is set up for early February when there will be a start to more detailed planning and assignment of roles - including the main contact person/coordinator.

MANCHESTER - Fran Townsend

Over the past 12 months we have run a total of 12 community workshops 9 Level Ones and 3 Level Twos. Our partnership with Tameside MIND continues to be successful, running 4 workshops there with a mix of MIND clients and people who have booked via the AVP office. We also ran a Level One and Level Two for Tameside MIND counsellors and volunteers. We are talking with Glossop MIND in Derbyshire to arrange to run workshops for their clients too. Our annual workshop at Bradford University is always successful, and last year we also ran one at

Manchester Metropolitan University, with 17 completing participants. Tasters have been run in Stockport and Bolton for organisations working to help young people into employment.

Unfortunately our prison initiatives have not been so successful; we have had talks with the Governor at Styal Women's prison and HMP Preston. Preston have now decided to run their own in-house anger management programme. Styal initially showed interest in us running a workshop for prison staff, but felt that inmates lives were

too chaotic to attend a workshop.

We welcome our new Development Officer Emma Walsh who started in September and we also moved premises into a larger brighter office still in the basement of the Friends Meeting House in Central Manchester.

MIDLANDS AND WALES - Stephen Kemp

The Midland & Wales Region of AVP Britain has been formed by combining the former Midlands Group and Wyvern Group. Wyvern had been set up to serve the counties of Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire and had always had its base in Hereford. Since the collapse of the Aberystwyth Group, Wyvern had taken in the few facilitators in mid-Wales. We are now a very scattered group of AVPers but a number of us have established a pattern of quarterly meetings in Worcester.

The old Midlands Group ran workshops at Onley YOI and at Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre in Birmingham but never established a pattern of community workshops. Wyvern ran workshops in each of the four counties, including in 3 prisons, but Hereford had been the main centre of activity. Enrolment in Hereford workshops has been thinning out and we have decided to await the outcome of an approach to Mind and the Mental Health Service for support before planning our future programme. Meanwhile, many of the facilitators on our list are quite active in other regions.

SHEPTON MALLET - Virginia Membrey

With a committed team of coordinators and volunteers, AVP Shepton Mallet has developed a successful partnership with South Somerset Mind and has delivered level 1 and level 2 workshops at the centre. Last year saw a welcome return to workshops at HMP Shepton Mallet and the first of three planned workshops was delivered in November to a group of eight lifers.

SCOTLAND - Elizabeth Allen

New Year is, of course, a time for looking back and for looking forward. This year is a significant one for AVP Scotland as May, 2007 marks the tenth anniversary of our beginnings. On the 18th of May, 1997 an ad hoc group of five met to set up a couple of pilot workshops in Scotland, in the hope that AVP would take off. To help them on their way, Jenny Hartland of AVP York suggested the group consider the following:

1. Forming an organising group
2. Selecting a date for the workshop
3. Finding local support
4. Participant numbers
5. Workshop costs

They also received a list of people in Scotland who had contacted Helen Drewery at Friends House, London about AVP but she apologised that there were fewer than she might have expected. Undaunted and without financial resources, they went ahead with residential Level 1 workshops in November and in the following February. These were successful and AVP Scotland was launched on 28th March, 1998. At this launch meeting eleven people volunteered to form the Core Group, six of them are still associated with AVP.

To date, we have run a total of 39 Level 1 and 18 Level 2 workshops in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Shetland, Thurso and Kilmarnock Prison and AVP has touched the lives of 314 people in Scotland. In addition, we have held 2 Training for Facilitators workshops plus 2 Role Play workshops and we have hosted a residential AVP British National Gathering.

We have struggled and we continue to struggle. Support comes and it goes. At the moment our Core Group is well supported, with 14 members but, as we have no paid workers, we lean heavily on a small number of people. Workshop numbers are unpredictable. Try as we may, we cannot guarantee that those who apply for

places will attend the workshops. The more we work with disadvantaged and traumatised people, the more this is the case. On a positive note, it is my impression that AVP is becoming better known among those who work with these people. Recently I was astonished to be told by a man who was looking for a Level 1 workshop that a 'bouncer' outside a club gave him a leaflet about AVP to help him deal with his problems with violence.

Our Core Group realised that to increase the profile of AVP and to reach those who would benefit from our workshops, we needed to communicate what we do with greater clarity. All too often the feedback we receive after workshops is that participants didn't understand what they were going to but they found it useful anyway! In October, we had a special Core Group meeting to start this process by

- Improving our knowledge and understanding of AVP, drawing on our own experience
- Deciding on the Key Messages

Deciding how to communicate/ present these, including what materials we might need to develop to get these across to different audiences

This is work in progress and we hope that it pays off. During most of our 10 years, we have grown organically, taking up opportunities as they have arisen. Looking forward to the next 10 years, we are trying to have a more planned approach. We want to continue working in prison and have just been invited to provide further workshops in HMP Kilmarnock. We also want to work in partnership with other organisations and are currently exploring the possibility of project work in those housing schemes with a high record of violence in Edinburgh and Glasgow. We believe that if we can establish a few pilot projects which are meeting an identified need, we will increase the credibility of AVP and this will be the start of sustainable growth.

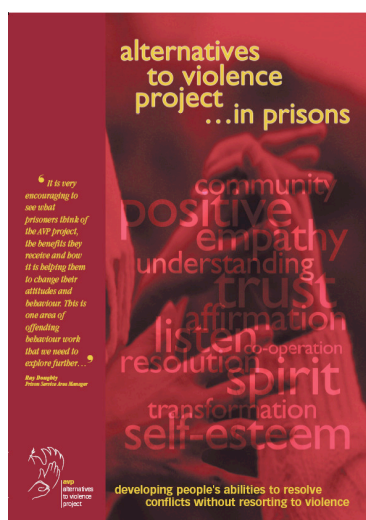
AVP prison project news

The AVP prison programme remains a central strand of AVP Britain's work. Over the past year we have run workshops in HMPs Kilmarnock, Shepton Mallet, Brixton and Glen Parva Youth Offenders Institute and thanks to the support of Lankelly and the Tudor Trust, we have recently recruited a part-time national prison project Coordinator, Rosie Aubrey, to build on the platform of successful work already completed.

AVP's prison programme has faced a key challenge in recent years. Prison Service guidelines, introduced in 2002, set tighter controls on external interventions working in prisons. New guidelines require all external regime interventions to be accredited either by the Prison Service or by an external accrediting body. In response to this, AVP Britain is currently in the process of applying for internal accreditation for work planned in both Shepton

Mallet and Brixton prisons. If successful, this would mark a major step forward for AVP and provide us with greater access to prisons in future as an approved Prison Service regime intervention. Rosie is also working closely with AVP London towards developing London Open College Network accreditation for the AVP programme.

In early 2007, we have workshops planned for Shepton Mallet and Kilmarnock. We are also developing a closer relationship with the Safer Custody Department and we hope to introduce AVP as part of their Violence Reduction Strategy in a number of prisons this year.



Approaching prisons in your area...

If you're interested in approaching your local prison AVP Britain has resources to help you. There is a prison pack, as pictured here, as well as a DVD showing clips of our work at HMP Grendon.

Please contact Rosie Aubrey to order any of these materials or for advice on how to approach the prison service.

Facilitator review of the first workshop at HMP Shepton Mallet

On November 18th AVP returned to HMP Shepton Mallet, after an absence of a few years. The prison has become a Lifers-only Category C prison since our last work there, and the prison liaison officer was extremely positive and helpful throughout. Working in prisons is often difficult for practical reasons, but we worked over a quiet weekend and in a relatively unthreatening space within the prison, which helped enormously.

Eight participants completed the workshop, out of ten who had started. Many of the participants had experienced different prison courses during the course of their sentence already, such as Enhanced Thinking Skills (ETS). The workshop therefore went at a considerable pace - we were challenged to give them a workshop that would both interest and stretch them. The contributions and very open sharings from a very thoughtful and genuine group made the workshop a very rich and rewarding experience for all. We found the men were already very used to cooperating and compromising with each other. This seemed to be because of their cramped confinement over long periods.

It was very impressive in some ways, but leaned towards conflict avoidance rather than resolution, and risked bottling up feelings and resentments rather than finding constructive ways of resolving them. There was, generally, a strong reluctance to exhibit or admit to conflict, despite the workshop explicitly being a 'safe' setting. Deep-seated resentments about other people, including those with responsibilities and power over them within the prison, were difficult to constructively work with. This is something future facilitators will have to take account of, and will need further work.

As for logistics, it was an unnervingly comfortable experience for the facilitation team. Virginia Membrey had arranged lovely accommodation, food, a log fire and even a friendly dog for us in the nearby village of Batcombe, a scenic drive from the prison itself -- just as the autumn leaves were turning.

REVIEWS of reading materials related to AVP or dealing with violence or conflict

Non-violence and Community Reflections on the Alternatives to Violence Project By Newton Garver and Eric Reitan

Reviewed By:
MARGOT LUNNON

This is a Pendle Hill Pamphlet and could certainly be got from the Quaker Bookshop opposite Euston; it should be available from AVP USA but I did not find it in their product list at www.avpusa.org.

This is an attempt by two US AVP-ers to tease out the philosophy behind AVP and especially the assumptions it makes about community. It doesn't assume that you know much if anything about AVP; it is written for Quakers but seems not to assume that background either. It incorporates some stories about what happens in AVP workshops and identifies 10 factors that help make it happen.

We would all be likely to feel that a group of people in an AVP workshop form a community, but what does that mean and how does it help?

It means (drawing on the Mandala) to be in a setting where one can show self-respect and caring for others and where one will be shown respect and concern. That makes it safe to take risks. It means that one can have an effect without needing to throw one's weight about, metaphorically or literally. One can look for solutions that will work for the Other Guy as well as for oneself. It also means that everything one does should foster that sense of belonging and not damage it.

One throw-away line mentions on-going AVP maintenance groups for people who have done courses—does any region run these in UK? Maybe we should do so?

The War Hotel: Psychological Dynamics in Violent Conflict by Arlene Audergon (Whurr Publishing, 2005)

Reviewed By:
HUBERT CASSEL

Arlene writes : "I've had a yellow Post-it on my wall to remind me, 'Either everyone is completely crazy or history is not in the past' ".....in other words history is present in conflict, and working from that perspective allows for greater awareness of the different voices in conflict, and for the possibility of including these towards a non-violent resolution. Arlene is a Process Work facilitator and trainer in London who draws on the works of Arnold Mindell (many books including one on facilitating conflict resolution called *Sitting in the Fire*: Lao Tse Press 1995). Process Work is not shy of using role play in all sorts of different ways and is experiential, experimental and very aware of diversity issues. AVP seems to me to be experiential, but sometimes not experimental or diverse/inclusive enough...then again it takes at least 5 years to train as a Process facilitator, and a fair amount of therapy...

Prescription for Anger: Coping with angry feelings and angry people. Gary and Carol Hankins, Barclay Press 2000.

Reviewed By:
HUBERT CASSEL

Very different from the War Hotel, this book behaves like a encyclopedia, gathering together a lot of material around anger, some very useful (different opinions about anger, passive-aggressive behaviour and self-talk for example). It also has a useful index to facilitate dipping in and out of the book , although interestingly only one entry for violence - If violence is defined as 'what violates me' then a lot of anger can be experienced as violence. The Twenty Most Important Aspects of Constructive Discipline, which are intended as guidelines for assertive parenting, are worth reflecting on before facilitating a workshop. Here are the first three (without the accompanying notes) 1. Be a good model 2. Be in touch with your intentions 3. Be aware of your verbal and non-verbal communications ...if I could just remember those three!!!!

How Restorative is AVP - Evaluating the Alternatives to Violence Project According to a Restorative Justice yardstick M Bischoff AVP Distribution service 2003

Reviewed By: HUBERT CASSEL

With the longest title this is, naturally, the shortest text - a pamphlet of 20 pages - but worth the read despite the threat of a yardstick. Bischoff, an AVP facilitator, questions amongst other things how much space we give in workshops for considering violence from the perspective of the victim, sometimes an assumption can creep in that we are personally responsible for all the violence we experience and how in prison work we can be biased towards looking from the offender's point of view. Bischoff talked to a professional victim advocate about this who said to him ' Even though the victims weren't physically there...I had a responsibility to take their perspectives very seriously. If offenders were taking crimes they did lightly or dismissing any harm done to their victims, it was my responsibility to stand up for those victims' At the end of the pamphlet there are 10 Restorative Justice Signposts (or principles) and the last three are: 1. Encourage collaboration and reintegration, rather than coercion and isolation 2. Give attention to the unintended consequences of our actions and programs 3. Show respect to all parties, including victims, offenders and justice colleagues.....and , of course (though not easy), to ourselves.



International

Hartbeespoort Dam, South Africa

My AVP South African Experiences

The AVP international gathering is held every two years. The only one I had been to was in 2000, held in Oxford, England. I really enjoyed that event and was determined to go to the 2006 gathering in South Africa. It's a long way to go so I combined it with a holiday and my daughter and I hired a car and toured around. I arranged to stay with a facilitator, Pauline, originally from Liverpool but living in Grahamstown, just above the South Coast, east of Port Elizabeth. We stayed with her on Sunday night and she told me she had arranged for us to go to the local prison the following morning at 9am. It took some finding and we were late but we went in with no formalities. No ID checks, I couldn't believe it! We met Mr. Baloti, "call me Baloti", the Chief Social Worker, a large affable man.

In his somewhat cluttered office I explained what AVP is and he invited us to do a taster workshop for some of his "boys". We arranged to come back at noon, and raced back to the town. We called on a newly trained facilitator, Nospawa, who spoke the local language and asked for her help. Pauline and I put a programme together and then collected Nospawa on our way back to the prison. We cleared a large meeting room of its desks and arranged the chairs in a circle before 18 boys were brought in. I should point out that this room had double doors that opened out onto the car park outside the prison and that they were open.

The boys came in quietly and respectfully and took their seats followed by Baloti. They were attentive throughout and asked lots of questions. They also helped each other because not everyone spoke English. I was impressed by their genuine desire to learn and take the lessons on board. There was a sense that they knew that they had been left behind by society and wanted to catch up. Their attitude was so different from that of the young men in our Young Offenders Institutes. At the end Pauline made arrangements for further contact with Mr. Baloti and I left in awe of the prospects.

Hartbeespoort is a resort based around a large reservoir and spectacular dam about 50 miles NW of Johannesburg. The International Gathering was held over 6 days at the end of August. We had the Good Shepherd Retreat Centre to ourselves, a variety of buildings, all with wonderful thatched roofs based around a central grassy area, providing places to eat, sleep and meet. The registration on Sunday teatime was a bit chaotic, hardly surprising with over a 100 people from about 30 countries. The food, however, was fantastic.

Each morning started with a plenary session and it was interesting to hear other people's experiences and methods of running workshops. On Monday I went to a workshop on Gacaca Courts in Rwanda. Following the 1994 genocide so many people were in prison, implicated in the killing that judging all of them would have taken hundreds of years. An alternative for those considered to have perpetrated lesser crimes was to be tried by a local people's court headed by a locally appointed judge with a limited amount of training. Some of these Gacaca Judges were given AVP training and that was shown to result in greater impartiality. On Tuesday I volunteered to help facilitate a 2.5-hour workshop on HIV/AIDS. There were 8 of us and I was the only one not from Africa. All the others were actively involved in HIV/AIDS issues and I realised how big the gulf was between me, a European for whom it is well down our list of issues and Africans for whom it is an everyday matter of immense importance. It helped me to understand some of the issues and to appreciate how a session of a workshop could be devoted to a special topic.

On our last evening we had a presentation explaining the shape of the proposed new international structure. This was followed by entertainment provided mainly by the younger members from Soweto, but with party pieces for others. For me the most memorable was a song from Steve Angel. The Sowetans sang, danced and drummed with great gusto.

The whole gathering inspired me greatly. I heard, first hand, of dedication well beyond what is normal here, of places, particularly in Africa where AVP is growing exponentially, because there is a real need for it, and from people whose lives have been radically changed for the better by AVP. More than anything else it was the wonderful people I met that sent me on my way determined to do more AVP.



Gathering 2006

27th August to 1st September



I had a week to spare at the end of the gathering with no plans but an expectation that something would turn up. I was introduced to Shena Lamb, an academic at the Nelson Mandela University in Port Elizabeth. She was looking for facilitators for two workshops she was running at the university for primary school teachers. I volunteered together with Sally from Australia and Mlu from Cape Town. Port Elizabeth is on the South Coast several hundred miles from Johannesburg so we flew down and stayed with Shena. The schools were closed for the two days of the workshops and every teacher came including the heads. As there were about 40 teachers at each school they were divided into two groups of 20. Sally and Mlu facilitated one group, while Shena and I facilitated the other. Sally and I had worked out a programme before hand, which worked quite well. I was impressed by their dedication and we worked hard to cram a first level workshop into two days. On the third day we began

again but with the second school. It was easier because we had a well honed programme and we had three more facilitators, Pauline, Debbie from USA and Peter from New Zealand.

We started each day with prayers and singing led by the teachers. This was very important to them and at my request they did some in English so that the facilitators would be included. I learned a lot from the other facilitators and realised that AVP is growing fast in South Africa and the facilitators experience is growing with it. I was grateful for the thorough grounding we get in the UK, the discipline and the attention to detail that we work on here, which held me in good stead in the sometimes chaotic conditions there.

I really treasure my experiences of South Africa and look forward to more international AVP.

By: Alan Saleh



Far left: A group photo taken by Gerald Blitz from Hong Kong

The International Gathering brought together 104 delegates from 23 countries.

A different point of view

It's four months since the I.G. in South Africa and I'm thinking about what has stayed with me most since then. The first image to spring to mind is the banner sent by the men at Greenhaven prison, where it all began. AVP clearly means so much to them and it felt good that in a symbolic way, those men were there with us.

There were stories of transformations from all over the world- personal, group, societal transformations, achieved with such commitment, vitality, imagination and enthusiasm. I have a belief that there is an overwhelming culture of inertia here in Britain. We are a hugely regulated and controlled society (often starting from positive desires to create personal safety and protect public money) but the culture of red-tape, accountability and fear of risk is smothering

our creativity and energy is so many fields of activity, especially in the voluntary and charitable sector. I came away from South Africa with that belief strengthened and confirmed. Other countries, particularly in Africa, are just getting on with it and growing AVP in an inspiring way. AVP in Britain is lagging far behind so many other countries in terms of growth and development. We may be affluent and privileged in many ways, but we are climbing a mountain with sacks of coal strapped to our backs.

I hope that doesn't sound hopelessly pessimistic. If anything, I am trying to help us understand why we seem to find our work so difficult and to rid us, the AVPers of Britain, from feelings of guilt and inadequacy that I certainly find it easy to fall into.

by: Jenny Hartland

Natalie Hewison



Natalie in the London office

I'm Natalie and I am the Coordinator for AVP in London. I am probably an unusual Coordinator, in that before I started working here, I had not participated in a workshop myself and hadn't even heard of AVP! I came to AVP after working on developing a literacy and numeracy support project for prisoners and key workers in the community as well working for a lottery funder. These roles gave me a good basis of skills to take AVP forward and with my lack of AVP experience came a fresh perspective so I have been able to take on the challenge of developing AVP. I attended my Level 1 workshop here with a fantastic team of facilitators and am hoping to do my Level 2

somewhere else so I can see how other regions do it! I was also very privileged to be able to attend the AVP International Gathering in South Africa last year. This gave me a real insight into the potential scope of our work and has inspired me to explore new roles for AVP in London. I work for AVP London full time so I am always at the end of the phone if anyone wants to find out about our work here or get involved with workshops, I hope to hear from you soon!

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Emma Walsh

I have worked professionally in the community and voluntary sector for over four years. Between 2002 and 2003 I worked full time as a Coordinator of The Pankhurst Trust, a community centre for disadvantaged women in Manchester funded by the Home Office, the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, the European Regional Development Fund, Manchester City Council and Voluntary Action Manchester. In 2003, I became the Project Coordinator for a Multi Media Arts Project for IDEA (Innovation in Digital and Electronic Arts) funded by the European Social Fund. In 2005 I commenced my career working for a Youth Music project Music leader North West, a community music education project with a particular focus on professional development.

With my current position with AVP I feel I got the job primarily because of my relevant experience. A typical day might include a meeting with the

Scarman Trust to organise a funding strategy, and promotion of AVP training through local media. All of this requires a high level of organisational ability, due to the diversity of the work, prioritisation and excellent communication skills with a focus on clarity and openness. Advantages include a high degree of independence enabling me to develop my role as I feel appropriate. Also, lots of variety, meeting a wide range of people and the fun element of working on a local and regional community project.

Contact Emma:
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Fran Townsend

I have been involved with AVP for over 10 years now, having come on a workshop for personal reasons and finding that the skills I learnt really worked! "I" messages especially and the concept of Transforming Power are part of my daily living toolkit. Working as Project Co-ordinator for AVP Greater Manchester for nearly 4 years is both challenging and stimulating: the pressure of organizing

workshops and making sure that everything and everyone come together at the right time in the right place, and the delight I feel at the feedback from participants (and facilitators) that AVP has helped them on the way to leading happier, more peaceful lives.

Contact Fran:
0161 832 3660, info@avpgmr.org.uk



Rosie Aubrey

I joined AVP back in October to take up post as the national prison project Co-ordinator. I first experienced AVP in 2005 whilst on a one-year placement with Quaker Peace and Social Witness in South Africa. I was immediately struck by AVP's ability to help individuals and communities respond to the staggering levels of violence in South Africa. As coordinator for last years AVP International Gathering, I was extremely impressed by the vast array of

AVP programmes running around the world. The Gathering affirmed for me the vision of AVP and gave me a real insight in to its transformative potential. I hope to bring the knowledge and experience I have gained through this work to my new post with AVP Britain.

Contact Rosie:
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Graduation Day! My First AVP Workshop at Aha Thuto Secondary School, Orange Farm

What's new on the AVP Britain website?

The AVP Britain website is now in it's next stage of development. If you have visited the site recently you will have seen that the design has improved and we now have our first online video showing clips of our work at HMP Grendon. The website continues to generate enquiries about AVP workshops and the online facilitator database is a great resource for coordinators. We are all very grateful to Anand Madhvani for his fantastic work on the site and his great patience with those of us who are less IT literate!

It is now possible to add facilitation histories for workshops so please start gathering information about past workshops in your area so we can add them to a database. These records will enable us to review our long history and help us approach funders with a clear

work record. In March Anand also hopes to develop an online forum where AVPers can post gatherings, ask for advice or share their news so please do keep checking the site for new features.

One of the latest features is that by logging in to the site and viewing workshop dates, facilitators are now able to see planned workshop teams and which workshops still need facilitators. If you are able to fill any of the gaps, please contact the local coordinator.

Anand has offered to visit local groups and give an induction and training on how to use the new features of the site. He would like to do this in the first two weeks of March so if your local group would like some training please contact Anand to arrange a convenient date: anand@dosima.org

Dates to Save -AVP Workshops and events

February 2007

- * Fri 2- Sun 4- Greater Manchester Level 1
- * Fri 16- Sun 18- Bradford University Level 1
- * Fri 23- Sun 25- York Level 1
- * Sat 24 ~ Training day for new prison Facilitators
- * Tue 27- Thu 1 Mar ~ South Somerset Mind

March 2007

- * Fri 9- Sun 11- AVP London Level 1
- * Fri 9- Sun 11- HMP Shepton Mallet Level 1, Prison
- * Fri 16- Sun 18 ~ Greater Manchester Level 1
- * Fri 23- Sun 25- Doncaster Mind Level 1, NHS referrals

April 2007

- * Fri 20-Sun 22 ~ Greater Manchester Level 2
- * Fri 27- Sun 29 ~ York Level 2

May 2007

- * Fri 11-Sun 13- Doncaster Mind Level 2, NHS referrals
- * Fri 18- Sun 20- AVP London Level 2
- * Fri 18- Sun 20- Greater Manchester Level 1

June 2007

- * Fri 15-Sun 17 ~ Greater Manchester Level 1

Training Day for New Prison Facilitators

This is a training day designed for all AVP facilitators and apprentices interested in working with prisoners and young offenders. The course will examine issues concerning facilitating AVP within the criminal justice system and highlight the practical and safety issues associated with working in a secure unit. This will also be an opportunity to explore your own motivations and apprehensions of working in a prison setting.

All participants will receive a copy of the '*AVP Rough Guide to Working in Prisons*'.

When? 24th February 2007 10am - 4pm

Where? The Grayston Centre, 28 Charles Square, London

For more information and to book a place, please contact Rosie Aubrey.

Rosie Aubrey, Prison Project Coordinator

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Putting the fun back in FUNdraising

In October last year, Karen Reilly and her team of staff at the Playhouse Bar in Norwich raised £82 for AVP Britain by holding a rather unusual ladies night! The following letter and photos arrived in the AVP London office and brought smiles.

We wanted to raise money to help support charities working to reduce domestic violence so we held a fancy dress party where everyone dressed up as ladies, even the boys! We advertised it as a 'Ladies Night'; it was interesting to see the blokes' reactions to their 'lady' boy staff! Our barmen felt vulnerable dressed as women and the men being served by them felt humble and it seemed to take the all testosterone out of the room! It was a nice unexpected outcome and the evening was great fun.

*Best wishes,
Karen*



Running a marathon, holding an AVP coffee morning or attempting a sponsored silence, there are loads of ways you can help raise funds for your local AVP group. The money you raise could make a real difference, helping to provide bursaries for workshop participants, sustaining your local group or supporting prison workshops. Get together with family, friends or colleagues and organise your own fundraising events, here are a few ideas!

Ask - you'll never know if you don't!

Line dancing evening, get those legs moving!

Tea party

Evening cocktail party

Raffle, ask local businesses for prizes

Nature ramble

Auction of promises

Treasure hunt

International evening with food and drink from other countries

Variety show

Easter egg hunt

Sponsored events

Tug of war, get your local sports clubs involved!

Office outing

Valentine's party

I message marathon!

Organise a group excursion

Ladies night

Expert talk

Non uniform day, persuade your local school or your work

Coffee morning

Exhibition or craft fair

Pancake race

Recycling project

Offer to help your local AVP group, its as valuable as money!

Jam making

Exciting events or parties

Collection at your church, school or meeting

TV quiz, organise your own weakest link competition!

A big thank you to everyone who has supported AVP over the years and made a valuable contribution either with their time or by raising money. We are really grateful for all your help and support.

AVP Materials from the USA:

AVP London has recently purchased publications and resources from AVP USA. These include:

- *Welcome to AVP: The spirit and skills of nonviolence*

This DVD is an introduction of AVP for interested prison officials and potential participants in and outside prison walls. It presents a number of stories and examples displaying local and prison workshops in the USA. There are frank testimonials and a discussion of prison work which emphasises that any and all of us can make a difference.

- *Another Way?*

The DVD 'Another Way' follows four inmates through an AVP prison workshop in the USA and then revisits them three years later. Will AVP workshops challenged ingrained patterns of violence; will these changes be sustained once the workshops are over? 'Another Way' lets us get to know these men and their challenges and think about what this means for the rest of us.

- *AVP picture sharing*

A disk of 190 pictures in .jpg format which you can print for use during the picture sharing exercises.

- *AVP Publications*

A CD ROM containing the Basic, Advanced, Youth and Training for Trainers Manuals. Having these in electronic form would enable you to print and refer to particular pages.

AVP is permitted to reproduce these materials for facilitators and other individuals and organisations whose purpose is to educate and spread techniques and practices of nonviolence. If you are interested in purchasing any of the materials, either for your local group or for your own personal interest please contact Natalie at AVP London. There will be a charge for materials and postage. Alternatively, all of the materials above can be borrowed from the AVP London office.

If you are interested in other AVP materials available for purchase, please see the website: www.avpusa.org

A note from your Editor:

My name is Rebecca David and I have spent the month of January 07 working with AVP. The reason I've been able to do this is I attend Germantown Friends School in Philadelphia Pennsylvania, and they give juniors the month of January off to do a project of their choosing. I e-mailed Natalie and she arranged for me to work with AVP in Manchester and London and to compile a national newsletter. I first spent two weeks in the AVP Greater Manchester office working with Fran and Emma. While there I sent out e-mail requesting articles and did various other tasks around the office. Next, I came to London and have been here working on the formatting and layout of this newsletter as well as helping out with whatever has been needed. The main non-newsletter task that I did was helping to prepare for the workshop that took place last weekend (the 19th -21st of January), a workshop in which I was a participant.

Prior to the workshop I was slightly nervous because despite my work with AVP I really didn't know what to expect, I couldn't even imagine how the other participants felt. For me Friday night was awkward, especially in the beginning, but by the end of the evening the group had begun to bond I knew it was going to be a great experience. The workshop helped me to recognise that even if I don't hit or kick some of my behaviour, such as giving the silent treatment, is

violent, which is something I had not previously done. The workshop helped me see other paths to healthier solutions. Our facilitators, Kathryn, Anne-Fred, Arthur, and Aquinas all brought something unique to the group and the four of them offered different points of view and ways of doing things that kept the workshop well balanced. Overall my experience with AVP, both in the offices and in the workshop, has been excellent. I have learned a lot and hope I have contributed just as much.

I hope you all enjoy this newsletter.

-Rebecca

